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ABSTRACT

Recent research investigating the consequences of match-mismatch in cognitive style status for interpersonal attraction in teacher-student, patient-therapist, and other dyads suggests that matched persons are more likely to develop positive feelings toward each other. To assess the impact of cognitive style on the outcomes experienced by married partners, 48 married couples participated in a research session which included the Embedded-Figures Test, Rotter's I-E Scale, the Locke Wallace Short Marital Adjustment Test, and the Ryder Lovesickness Scale. Contrary to predictions, the data suggested that regardless of the wives' locus of control or the interaction of the husbands' and wives' locus of control, wives with external husbands (field dependent--those with a turning-toward-people orientation) reported more dissatisfaction than wives married to internal husbands (field independent--those more concerned with ideas and principles rather than people). With regard to cognitive style, results showed that husbands married to field-dependent wives and wives from matched dyads had more complaints about their marital relationships. Matched dyads' reports of fewer complaints may be due mostly to their ability to settle disagreements more amicably. The findings suggest that cognitive personality variables may be useful in predicting marital satisfaction, and that partners' relative personality orientations may be more important for describing their relationship than individual test scores. (Author/JAC)

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Personality and Marriage: Cognitive Style and Locus of Control As Mediators of Marital Complaints

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Abstract

The present study focuses on the impact of two cognitive personality variables - namely Rotter's locus of control and Witkin's cognitive style constructs - on the outcomes experienced by married partners. Based upon past research, it was predicted that spouses reporting a high degree of marital dissatisfaction would be from dyads comprised of a relatively internal husband complemented by a relatively external wife. Consistent with Witkin's theory of psychological differentiation, it was predicted that spouses with relatively field-dependent partners and individuals from dyads with similar levels of differentiation would have fewer marital complaints.

The data were analyzed by examining the relationship between both individual and dyadic (match/mismatch) personality characteristics and marital satisfaction/complaints as measured by the Locke Wallace and Ryder Lovesickness scales. Contrary to the predictions, the data suggest that regardless of the wives' locus of control or the interaction of the husbands' and wives' locus of control, wives with external husbands reported more dissatisfaction than wives married to internal husbands. With regard to cognitive style, results showed, contrary to the predictions, that husbands married to field-dependent wives and wives from matched dyads had more complaints about their marital relationships. Interestingly, a further analysis of the marital satisfaction data suggested that the matched dyads' report of fewer complaints may be due mostly to their ability to reach a concensus on a number of marital issues and settle disagreements more amicably when they occur.

The results suggest that cognitive personality variables may be useful in predicting marital satisfaction scores and that partners' relative personality orientations may be more important for describing their relationship than their individual scores. However, the inconsistencies in the data suggest the need for further research to carefully evaluate the role of cognitive personality constructs in the intimate interpersonal domain.

The fascination with the role of individual difference, or personality, variables as mediators of interpersonal relationships and interactions now spans several decades. Of late, the validity of many of these studies has been called into question because of their almost exclusive reliance on the traditional global trait approach to the study of personality. For instance, Mischel (1968; 1973) and others(e.g. Argyle & Little, 1972; Endler & Magnusson, 1976) cite evidence that global personality traits, like neuroticism, dominance, and immaturity demonstrate little stability across situations, response modes, and over time. In addition, these variables have been criticized for being atheoretical.

Rather than abandon the study of personality traits completely, Mischel (1973) suggested that personality researchers instead turn their attention to cognitive personality characteristics. This suggestion follows Mischel's conclusion that such personality variables demonstrate a relatively high degree of consistency across situations and over time. Doherty (1981), noting Mischel's conclusions, calls for the examination of cognitive personality variables, like field dependence - field independence and internal - external locus of control expectancies, as mediators of marital relationships. The importance of these variables for the study of marital relationships is reflected in their consistent influence on the way in which people cognitively orient themselves to their social environment. These cognitive orientations theoretically influence the way in which information from one's social environment is perceived and processed and in turn influence people's social orientations. This being true, one would expect that such cognitive orientations would have an impact upon social and marital interactions and potentially affect the quality of these relationships.

These personality characteristics, however, have attracted little attention from marriage researchers. The exceptions are Doherty's (1981) and Mlott and Lira's (1977) research, using locus of control expectancies, which suggest

that a form of personality complementarity in marriage - a more external wife and a more internal husband - may be associated with marital dissatisfaction in wives. The present study explores the role of this and another of these cognitive personality characteristics in marriage. Specifically, Witkins cognitive style construct, derived from the theory of psychological differentiation (Witkin, Dyk, Faterson, Goodenough, & Karp, 1974/1962; Witkin, Lewis, Hertzman, Machover, Meissner, & Wapner, 1972/1954), and Rotter's locus of control construct (Rotter, 1966) are examined as mediators of marital complaints.

The Cognitive Style Construct

The main feature of psychological differentiation is segregation of self from non-self. According to Witkin and Goodenough (1977), differences in degree of self-nonself segregation lead to differences in the extent to which the self, or, alternatively, the field outside is likely to be used as a referent for behavior. The tendencies to rely on self or field as primary referents are termed the field independent (FI) and field dependent (FD) cognitive styles.

Cognitive Style and Interpersonal Attributes

According to Witkin and Goodenough (1977), field-dependence-independence, conceived as an expression of the self-nonself aspect of differentiation, has obvious implications for interpersonal behavior. Experience of one's own self as separate and distinct from that of others and, with it, reliance on internal referents, are likely to make for autonomy in social relations. In contrast, a less differentiated self and primary reliance on external referents may limit personal autonomy. Whether internal or external referents are given greater emphasis affects, in turn, the individual's orientation toward the main source of external referents -- other people. Therefore, one would expect that a reliance on external referents would be associated with a turning-toward-people orientation. This turning toward people orientation is likely to affect the

attractiveness of FD and FI people respectively.

The research amassed to date certainly seems to confirm the expectation that FD people are more interpersonally oriented. FD people have been found to make greater use of social referents in ambiguous situations (Busch & DeRidder, 1973) than FI people. In addition, there is suggestive evidence that FD persons make greater use of external social referents and are more attentive to social cues than FI people (Eagle, Goldberger, & Breitman, 1969; Konstadt & Forman, 1965). The evidence from the research is clear, as well, in demonstrating that FD persons show a strong interest in people and are described as being sociable, gregarious, affiliative, socially outgoing, prefer to be physically close to others and are emotionally open (Green, 1976; Sousa-Poza & Rohrberg, 1976; Sousa-Poza, Rohrberg, & Shulman, 1973). A contrasting set of descriptors of relatively FI persons includes: prefers solitary activity, individualistic, cold and distant in relations with others, aloof, and concerned with ideas and principles rather than people (Loveless, 1972; Oltman, Goodenough, Witkin, Freedman, & Friedman, 1975; Sousa-Poza & Rohrberg, 1976).

Based upon this research, it would seem plausible to conclude that the personal characteristics of FD and FI individuals delineated suggests, for example, that it may be easier to get along with FD people because of their stronger interpersonal orientation, interest in others and superior social skills. However, most of the research reviewed has not involved people involved in ongoing intimate relationships. It may be that interacting with a FD person on a long term basis is more difficult because of their greater interpersonal dependency. This is one of the questions the present research will address.

Match/Mismatch in cognitive style and interpersonal attraction. A recently

emerging literature has begun to take the issue of psychological differentiation as a variable in social interaction beyond the identification of socially relevant attributes of the kind enumerated above. These studies have examined the consequences of match-mismatch in cognitive style status for interpersonal attraction in teacher-student, patient-therapist, and other ad hoc dyads. The evidence from these studies suggests that persons who are matched are likely to develop positive feelings toward each other and mismatched persons negative feelings (Folman, 1973; Greene, 1972; Lockheed, 1977; Packer & Bain, 1978; Sousa-Poza & Rohrberg, 1976).

As to why similar members seem to get along better, Oltman et al. (1975) suggest that similar dyads share common foci of interest. Thus, the shared tendency of FD persons to concern themselves selectively with the social content of the environment is likely to help two such persons get along better when they interact. Similarly, when two FI persons interact, their shared interest in the more impersonal, abstract aspects of the surround should again make for a positive outcome in feelings toward each other. In addition, Freedman, O'Hanlon, Witkin and Oltman (1972) suggest that because of similarities in level of differentiation, two persons focus on the same aspects of an issue, approach the issue with the same emphases and concerns derived from shared personality attributes, and use common communication modes. Because of this, interaction between them is likely to be easier, generating, in turn, positive mutual feelings.

It is important to note, once again, that none of the research on match/mismatch effects has involved ongoing intimate relationships. The literature reviewed, however, suggests that dyads matched on cognitive style status would get along better.

Thus, in the present study, it was decided to focus on the impact of cognitive style on the outcomes experienced by married partners. It is

hypothesized that a spouse would have more complaints, particularly complaints that their partner is not warm and attentive enough, when that partner is relatively FI. In addition, it was expected that individuals from matched dyads would also have fewer complaints.

The Locus of Control Construct

The locus of control construct is derived from Rotter's Social Learning Theory and his emphasis on generalized expectancies. In Rotter's view, behavior is guided by the expectancy that reinforcement will occur or the desired outcome will be achieved. This expectancy that reinforcement will occur is a function of past experiences generalized from other situations. These expectancies are learned cognitive sets that potentially affect a variety of behavioral choices over a broad range of life situations (Rotter, 1966). The locus of control construct is, therefore, according to Rotter, the generalized expectancy that one's outcomes are contingent more on one's own efforts as compared to outside forces such as luck, fate, or powerful others. The former is said to characterize persons with an internal locus of control while the latter characterizes individuals with an external locus of control.

Locus of Control and Interpersonal Attributes

Strickland (1977) in a review of the locus of control literature, observed that there have been relatively few attempts to examine the interpersonal significance of internality and externality. In addition, as Doherty notes (1981) few of these studies have used ongoing dyads. For these reasons, it is difficult to draw a direct theoretical link between locus of control expectancies and the outcomes experienced by married partners.

Relevant to the application of control expectancies to ongoing relationships, however, are a number of personal attributes found to be consistently associated

with a relatively internal locus of control orientation. Specifically, the data suggest, as reviewed by Strickland (1977) and Doherty (1981), that relatively internal individuals are less conforming, are more task oriented, particularly when they value an outcome, are more achievement-oriented, and report better personal adjustment. These findings led Doherty to speculate, when extending the locus of control construct to marriage, that internals, believing in more personal control over marital events than do externals, may work harder to achieve success in their marital relationships. Hence it might be concluded that internality would be negatively correlated with marital complaints. This assertion was only partially examined by Doherty (1981) in that he found no statistically significant correlations between individuals' locus of control scores and their own marital dissatisfaction scores. In other words, Doherty's data do not support the assumption that internality is associated with one's own relationship satisfaction. As to whether internality would be associated with one's partner's assessment of a relationship is not clear in that correlations of one's partner's locus of control with one's own complaints was not reported by Doherty. Hence, the present study will examine the inter-relationship between internality and one's own and one's partner's marital complaints.

Match/Mismatch in Locus of Control. As there have been relatively few attempts to examine the interpersonal significance of locus of control, concomitantly, there have been relatively few attempts to examine the issue of match/mismatch effects. Doherty (1981), in his study on locus of control differences and marital dissatisfaction, found that a more external wife/internal husband configuration was associated with marital dissatisfaction in wives. This finding was taken as a partial replication of Mlott and Lira's (1977) research comparing

the locus of control configurations in marital couples seeking therapy to nondistressed couples where the distressed couples were also characterized by an external wife/internal husband configuration.

As to why this particular configuration results in more dissatisfaction, Doherty suggests that internal husbands react negatively to their external wives' need for social support resulting in the wives feeling less satisfied with their relationships. Importantly, dissimilarity in personality orientation alone does not covary with relationship dissatisfaction in that wives from the wife internal/husband external dyadic configuration were significantly more satisfied than those from the wife external/husband internal dyadic configuration. Doherty concludes that the findings of his study may be viewed as breaking new ground in two ways:

> First, a cognitive personality variable has been found useful in predicting marital satisfaction/dissatisfaction scores. Second, marital partners' relative personality orientations were found to be more important for describing their relationship than their individual scores (Doherty, 1981; 376).

Consequently, the present study will also examine the mediating impact of dyadic match/mismatch on locus of control expectancies on reported marital complaints. The basic expectation, following Mlott and Lira and Doherty, is that spouses reporting a high degree of marital dissatisfaction would be from dyads comprised of a relatively internal husband complemented by a relatively external wife. In addition, as mentioned above, the present study also examines the interrelationship between internality and one's own and one's partner's marital complaints. Because Doherty found that internality in husbands was associated with wives' marital dissatisfaction, when these males were paired with external females, and that internality in wives was associated with

wive's marital satisfaction, when these females were paired with external males, it is unclear as to whether internality alone would be associated with high or low marital complaints.

In summary, the present study focuses on the impact of two cognitive personality variables -- namely Witkin's cognitive style and Rotter's locus of control constructs -- on the way in which spouses evaluate their marital relationships. Consistent with Witkin's theory of psychological differentiation, it is predicted that spouses with relatively field-dependent partners and individuals from dyads with similar levels of differentiation would have fewer marital complaints. Based upon Doherty's research, it is predicted that spouses reporting a high degree of marital complaints would be from dyads comprised of a relatively internal husband complemented by a relatively external wife. In addition, the present study will explore the mediating impact of one's locus of control orientation on one's own and one's partner's marital complaints.

Method

Subjects

The sample consists of 48 married, white, middle-class couples recruited from the Couples Project at the University of Connecticut. The Couples Project is an ongoing longitudinal research project under the direction of Robert G. Ryder. The couples project, begun in 1976, recruits couples by mail in their first year of marriage and asks them to participate in a longitudinal study of marrieds. In the summer of 1979, all of the active members of the Couples Project were contacted and asked to participate in a study for the author's dissertation (Sabatelli, 1980). In all, 102 couples were contacted, of which 48 agreed to participate. It is important to note that Doherty used this same longitudinal research project for his sample in 1976-1977 (Doherty & Ryder, 1979). Thus,

by chance, 10 of the 48 couples in the present study also participated in Doherty's study. This overlap should increase the likelihood of similar results being obtained.

On the average, couples in the present study were married 32.8 months, with a sample range of 11 to 54 months. The mean income for the sample was $19.4 thousand/year, with a range of $6,000 to $40,000/year. Eleven of the couples (23%) had a child (all had one).

Procedure

The couples participated in a 2 and 1/2 hour research session in which personality, nonverbal communication, and marital dissatisfaction data were collected. The couples were paid $25 for their participation.

Instrumentation

The Embedded-Figures Test. The Embedded-Figures Test developed by Witkin (1971) was used to determine cognitive style status. The Embedded-Figures Test is a perceptual test in which the subject's task is to locate a previously seen simple figure within a larger complex figure which has been organized to obscure the sought after simple figure. The subjects are shown 12 pairs of simple and complex figures and are timed as to how long it takes them to find the embedded figure. An average time is subsequently determined which represents their score on the Embedded-Figures Test. Subjects with higher average times are relatively more field-dependent than those with lower times. Reliabilities for groups of college students are reported by Witkin (1971) to be .82 for males and .79 for females. Similarly, Witkin reports reliabilities of .90 for adult men and .82 for adult women. In addition to the individual cognitive style scores, couple difference scores were computed using the absolute difference between the husband's and wife's EFT scores.

Rotter's I-E Scale. Rotter's I-E Scale (Rotter, 1966) was used to measure locus of control expectancies. The scale consists of twenty-three forced choice items. Possible scores range from 0-23 on the basis of one point for each external choice. Hence, a higher score represents a more external orientation. Rotter (1966) reports split-half reliabilities approximating .70 and test-retest reliabilities averaging .63. With the present sample, the I-E scale had Cronbach's alphas (Cronbach, 1951) of .77 for husbands and .72 for wives. As with the EPT data, couple difference scores were computed using the absolute difference between the husband's and the wife's I-E scores.

The Locke Wallace Short Marital Adjustment Test. This standard marital adjustment scale, minus one item, was used as a general measure of marital complaints. (The omitted item, which asks whether the couple tends to stay at home or be consistently on the go, was deemed to lack face validity as a marital complaint.) The Short Marital Adjustment Test (Locke & Wallace, 1959) consists of 15 multiple choice items covering a wide range of marital issues. Construct and discriminant validity evidence indicates that the test items successfully discriminate between happily married and troubled or divorced couples. The authors report a split-half reliability coefficient of .90. In the present study, the scale was scored in the negative direction, i.e., a higher score will indicate more marital complaints. A reliability check on the data from the present study yielded Cronbach's alphas (Cronbach, 1951) of .67 for husbands and .66 for wives.

The Ryder Lovesickness Scale. Ryder's (1973) Lovesickness Scale was used to measure a specific type of marital complaint: namely that one's spouse is not paying enough attention to oneself or is not adequately loving. The scale consists of 32 items to which a subject could respond "True", "Partly True", or "False". A higher score represents more lovesickness complaints. The scale

was able to distinguish couples who had a child from couples who remained childless in a longitudinal study (Ryder, 1973). A reliability check on the data yielded Cronbach's alphas (Cronbach, 1951) of .82 for wives and .89 for husbands.

Results

Descriptive and Correlational Data

Table 1 presents the husband-wife means, standard deviations and minimum-

Insert Table 1 Here

maximum scores on the measure of cognitive style and locus of control. The EFT scores presented represent the average solution time for finding the embedded figure given in seconds. The tendency of females to be slightly more FD ($\bar{X}$ = 56.8) than males ($\bar{X}$ = 47.3) is consistent with findings from adult populations reported by Witkin (1971). However, these differences are statistically nonsignificant (t = 1.69; $p < .09$). With regards to the I-E scores, husbands were significantly more internal than were wives in this sample, with I-E scores averaging 9.8 and 11.5 respectively, $t(47) = 2.21$, $p < .03$. Similar findings were reported by Doherty (1981), though usually such sex differences are not found in the locus of control literature (Doherty, 1980).

In the present study, husbands' and wives' EFT, I-E and their EFT and I-E dyadic difference scores were correlated with their own and their partners' two measures of marital complaints. Table 2 presents the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients between these scores.

Insert Table 2 Here

With respect to cognitive style and marital complaints, it was predicted that spouses married to FD partners would have fewer complaints because of the

strong interpersonal orientation of FD individuals. This was expected to particularly apply to lovesickness complaints, i.e., complaints that one's partner is not adequately attentive or warm. With regards to the effects of dyadic match/mismatch on cognitive style, it was expected that individuals from matched dyads, i.e., those with small EFT differences, would have fewer complaints.

The data, however, do not support these predictions. Specifically, wives' cognitive style status correlated positively with husbands' Locke Wallace complaints ($r = .24$; $p < .05$). This suggests that husbands tend to have fewer Locke Wallace complaints with relatively FI wives -- a finding that is opposite of what was predicted. In addition, wives' Locke Wallace complaints correlated negatively with the couples' EFT differences ($r = -.27$; $p < .03$). This suggests that wives from mismatched dyads, i.e., with large EFT differences, evidence fewer Locke Wallace complaints. This finding was, again, opposite of what was expected.

Finally, there were no significant correlations between either wives' or husbands' EFT scores and lovesickness complaints. This was surprising because it was predicted that the interpersonal approach and personal characteristics of FI individuals would give rise to their partners having complaints that their spouse was not sufficiently warm or attentive.

With regards to locus of control and marital complaints, as in the Doherty study, none of the correlations between individuals' locus of control scores and their own marital complaint scores were statistically significant (Locke Wallace = .03 and -.01; Lovesickness = .20 and .01 for husbands and wives respectively). However, the correlations of one's partner's locus of control with one's own complaints, not reported by Doherty, suggest that wives' locus

of control correlates positively with husbands' Locke Wallace scores ($r = .17$) and negatively with husbands' lovesickness scores ($r = -.19$). The correlations between the husbands' locus of control and wives' complaint scores yield an r of .13 for wives' Locke Wallace and .29 ($p < .02$) for wives' lovesickness scores, suggesting, in the latter instance, that wives have more complaints with relatively external husbands.

Cognitive Style: Dyadic Match/Mismatch Effects.

In order to further test for dyad match/mismatch effects in cognitive style on marital complaints, a series of analyses of covariance, using marriage length, the presence of children and income as the covariates, were conducted with extremely matched or mismatched dyads. The intention was to form two matched groups (both husband and wife either FD or FI) and two mismatched groups (one spouse FI and the other FD). An attempt was made to have at least 8 couples in each cell who represented the most extreme marital pairs. Thus, 32 couples in all were selected on the basis of their EFT scores which placed them in one of the 4 extreme groups while the remaining one-third of the couples was dropped from the examination of match/mismatch effects. The selection process used to establish these extreme groups was modeled after Packer and Bain (1978), Sousa-Poza and Rohrberg (1976) and Lockheed (1977), all of which focused on match/mismatch effects and interpersonal attraction in same-sexed stranger or teacher/student dyads. A significant husband-wife EFT interaction would be taken as evidence of a match/mismatch effect.

These analyses serve to corroborate the correlational results in that the only effect noted was for wives' cognitive style on husbands' Locke Wallace complaints ($F(1,28) = 11.43$; $p < .002$). It appears that husbands have significantly more complaints with FD partners ($\bar{X} = 26.0$) than with FI partners ($\bar{X} = 22.5$) regardless of their own cognitive style or the dyads'

match or mismatch in cognitive style. Also, it is interesting that, even though there was a positive correlation between wives' Locke Wallace complaints and the dyads' EFT difference, there are no apparent consistent match/mismatch effects. However, the breakdown of wives' Locke Wallace complaints scores does suggest the tendency for wives of matched dyads ($\bar{X}$ = 25.3) to evidence more complaints than the wives from the mismatched dyads ($\bar{X}$ = 22.9) even though no interaction effect is noted ($F(1,28) = 1.20$; $p < .28$).

Finally, to further examine the impact of dyads' EFT differences, it was decided to examine extreme difference groups. Hence, two groups were created on the basis of the dyad's difference score falling into either the top or bottom third of the sample distribution. One-way analyses of covariance were conducted exploring the effects of large and small EFT differences on complaints. These results suggest that wives of small-difference dyads have significantly more Locke Wallace complaints ($\bar{X}$ = 25.5) than those from large-difference dyads ($\bar{X}$ = 22.7; $F(1,30) = 6.08$; $p < .02$). This finding, along with the absence of an effect for match/mismatch on the extreme groups, suggests that it is the degree of EFT difference between the marital partners, regardless of where on the FD/FI continum the husband or wife fall or which of the partners is the relatively more FD or FI member, that affects the wives' Locke Wallace complaints.

Locus of Control: Dyadic Match/Mismatch Effects.

In the Doherty study, the claim is made that the marital partners' relative personality orientations are a more important influence on the way in which wives describe their relationship than either the husbands' or the wives' individual orientations. Evidence for this comes from observing significant locus of control differences between husbands and wives for those wives reporting high levels of dissatisfaction while observing that the locus of control

orientations of wives high in dissatisfaction do not significantly differ from those of wives with low dissatisfaction. The conclusion drawn from this is that the highly dissatisfied wives were not distinguishable by their absolute locus of control scores, but rather by their position relative to their husbands. In the present study, in order to further explore this issue, it was decided to examine the level of reported dissatisfaction in dyads characterized by extreme homogamy or complementarity on locus of control using analysis of covariance procedures. Thus, rather than examining the discrepancies in locus of control scores in dyads characterized as being high or low in dissatisfaction, as was done by Doherty, variations in dissatisfaction scores were examined as to the degree they were influenced by husbands' and wives' locus of control expectancies alone and the interaction of these expectancies.

To accomplish this objective, extreme groups were created using the husbands' and wives' locus of control scores following the same procedure used to examine cognitive style dyadic match/mismatch effects. Thus , thirty-two couples in all were selected on the basis of their I-E scores which placed them in one of the four extreme groups while the remaining one-third of the couples was dropped from this examination of match/mismatch effects. A significant husband-wife I-E interaction would be taken as evidence of a match/mismatch effect.

Thus, the present analysis attempts to focus on the systematic variations in marital dissatisfaction scores due to the particular locus of control configuration for the dyads. A series of two-way analyses of covariance were run on these extreme groups using the marital dissatisfaction scores as the dependent measures and marital length and the presence of children as covariates. Consistent with Doherty's research, it should be expected that husbands and wives from dyads characterized by the complementary pattern of husbands internal/wives external would evidence more complaints than the other configurations.

The results of these analyses of covariance suggest that the only statistically significant findings are for the effects of husbands' locus of control expectancies on wives' dissatisfaction as measured by the Locke Wallace, $F(1,29) = 4.32$, $p < .04$, and lovesickness, $F(1,29) = 5.89$; $p < .02$, scales. The pattern of mean scores in both instances suggest that regardless of the wives' locus of control, or the interaction of the husbands' and wives' locus of control, wives with external husbands report more dissatisfaction than wives married to internal husbands ($\bar{X}$ = 22.0 vs 24.9 on the Locke Wallace measure and 54.5 vs 61.9 on the lovesickness measure).

Discussion

This study examined the relationship between two cognitive personality dimensions, Witkin's cognitive style and Rotter's I-E constructs, and marital complaints. The results, though they are contrary to what was predicted, and account for little variance, have relevance in that these personality variables have seldom been studied in ongoing intimate relationships such as marriage. As such, the study suggests the need for a careful evaluation of the role of these variables in the intimate interpersonal domain.

With regards to the cognitive style construct, the results of this study suggest that husbands married to relatively field independent partners and wives from dyads with large differences on cognitive style have fewer general global complaints about their relationships. The unexpected finding that husbands have fewer marital complaints with relatively FI partners warrants some attention. All of the cognitive style literature reviewed suggested that FD individuals are easier to get along with as inferred from their tendency to have an interpersonal orientation, show a strong interest in others and be emotionally open. Apparently for husbands, though, these orientations and tendencies of FD wives

give rise to more complaints. What might account for this unexpected finding?

A partial answer to this question may be in the attitudes that FD and FI women bring to their marriage relationships. Perhaps reflected in the construct of self differentiation is the degree to which an individual regulates and controls their interpersonal transactions. The individual with a relatively undifferentiated perceptual style may desire to develop relationships in which others assume considerable responsibility. As such, FD individuals may require considerable social and interpersonal support and attentiveness from their partners. In contrast, FI persons are likely to prefer relationships that minimize the amount of social influence and control on them and thus may minimize the amount of social influence and control on their partners.

It may be, therefore, that men find interacting with FD women on a long-term basis more difficult in that these women may require considerable social and interpersonal support. It should be recalled that most of the research involving FD/FI has not involved ongoing dyads. Hence, in studies involving experimentally created dyads, the conclusion that FD individuals are more attractive because of their strong interpersonal orientation makes sense if one considers the impermanence of these relationships and the limited amount of information available to the interactants. When the investigation of FD/FI is extended into ongoing intimate relationships, the expectations of, and attitudes about, ongoing interpersonal transactions may be of greater importance in determining relationship satisfaction, at least for men. Consequently, FI wives may be more attractive to their husbands because they are comfortable with, ore even foster, relationships that allow for the maintenance of a sense of separateness and independence. Conversely, long term interactions with FD wives may be less rewarding because their interpersonal needs result in them being perceived as too demanding.

The data for wives suggest that the variance in wives' Locke Wallace complaints is primarily due to the extent of the cognitive style differences between spouses. This too was opposite of what was predicted and again points to the need for a careful consideration of the interpersonal significance of cognitive style when extended to the interpersonal domain.

Speculation about why wives from mismatched dyads have fewer complaints involves the impact of cognitive style on decision-making and conflict resolution processes. Looking at these processes, research on psychological differentiation suggests that in situations where information is limited and/or conflict present, FD persons accommodate more to the positions taken by (a) the majority of group members and/or (b) the views expressed by the relatively more FI partners. The literature also indicates that those who resolve their disagreements tend to feel better about one-another (e.g., Oltman et al., 1975; Shulman, 1975; Solar, Davenport, & Bruehl, 1969). Thus, it may be that having at least one relatively more FD partner accounts for the finding that women from dyads with large cognitive style differences have fewer general marital complaints. The presence of the more FD partner would expedite conflict resolution and decision making and thereby increase positive feelings between partners.

The view that mismatched dyads would resolve disagreements in a way that contributes to the derivation of satisfaction from their relationships is further supported by a correlational analysis of the items of the Locke Wallace scale. Several of these items relate directly to the level of conflict or agreement on various common marital issues. In this analysis, the only significant correlations turned out to be between several items on the scale related to the frequency of disagreements and EFT differences. Specifically,

for wives, the frequency of disagreement was negatively related to the couples' EFT difference scores with respect to finances (-.24; $p < .05$), matters of recreation (-.29; $p < .02$), ways of dealing with in-laws (-.39; $p < .003$), and disagreements regarding conventionality or proper conduct (-.24; $p < .05$). In each of these areas, wives from mismatched dyads reported fewer disagreements. In addition, wives from these dyads were more likely to say that when disagreements arose, they usually resulted in agreement by mutual give and take (-.27; $p < .03$) rather than either the husband or the wife usually giving in. It would seem that wives from mismatched dyads perceive fewer disagreements on a number of marital issues and resolve their disagreements more equitable when they occur.

These are entirely speculative explanations and, as such, should be subjected to further empirical scrutiny. It is clear that the interpersonal significance of cognitive style needs to be further examined in ongoing intimate dyads. The results reported above call into question the generalizability of the research conducted with experimentally created dyads. This is not meant to discount the findings of past research. With respect to intimate interactions, however, the mediating effects of cognitive style may be different for different relationship types and the different sexes involved. Thus, it would seem that future research should consider the personality x sex x type of relationship interaction in further examining the interpersonal significance of psychological differentiation.

With regards to the locus of control construct, the results of this study fail to conform with Doherty's findings. Specifically, the analysis of homogamous and complementary dyads on the locus of control construct failed to demonstrate that wives' reported dissatisfaction was influenced more by their partners' relative personality orientations than by their individual orientations.

In addition, wives' dissatisfaction, or complaints, was found to be greater when they were paired with relatively external husbands regardless of the wives' locus of control or the interaction between the husbands' and the wives' locus of control. In other words, the findings of the correlational and analyses of covariance procedures both suggest that wives find interacting with an internal husband more rewarding, while in the Doherty study the external wife/internal husband configuration was found to be most prominent for those wives high in dissatisfaction. Thus, the fact that the data presented here does not conform to the findings of Doherty may call into question the relevance of the locus of control construct to the understanding of marital dynamics. Rather than discount the significance of the locus of control construct as applied to intimate relationships, however, an alternative explanation for the discrepancies in the data may have to do with the samples employed in the two studies. Both studies used samples drawn from the same longitudinal project. However, the sample used by Doherty was composed entirely of couples in their first year of marriage. Though Doherty does not present normative data on the measures of marital dissatisfaction, one may assume that the responses of these newlyweds are considerably skewed; i.e. it is rather unlikely that these couples are reporting high levels of dissatisfaction at this time. Thus, the findings reported by Doherty may be misleading if there is, in fact, very little variation in the degree of dissatisfaction reported by the couples. The data presented in the current study may be a more accurate reflection of the mediating impact of locus of control expectancies on marital dissatisfaction in that the couples sampled are no longer in the "honeymoon" phase of their marriages. It may be that wives find interacting with an internal husband more rewarding in that internals, believing in more personal control over marital events than do externals, may work harder to achieve success in their marital relationships.

Certainly the apparent discrepancies between these data suggest the need for future research.

In conclusion, it is important to stress, as does Doherty (1981), that the personality research on married dyads needs to be brought into a more current perspective - one that reflects a concern with individual difference variables that are relatively stable over time and across situations. The cognitive style and locus of control variables examined in the present research are examples of such variables. The results of this study suggest that future research is needed to both replicate this study and further extend the understanding of the role of these cognitive personality variables as mediators of marital relationships. In other words, cognitive personality variables may be useful in predicting marital satisfaction/dissatisfaction scores and the partners' relative personality orientations may be more important than their individual scores. However, the inconsistencies in the data suggest the need for further research to carefully evaluate the role of cognitive personality constructs in the intimate interpersonal domain.

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Table 1 Descriptive Data: Embedded-Figures Test and Internal-External Scale

Variable	Mean	S.D.	Minimum	Maximum	N
Male EFT	47.3	29.5	4.3	136.6	48
Female EFT	56.8	25.4	9.7	136.7	48
Absolute EFT Difference	31.7	24.2	6.0	92.6	48
Male I-E	9.8	4.2	2.0	20.0	48
Female I-E	11.5	4.3	2.0	19.0	48
Absolute I-E Difference	4.7	3.0	0.0	14.0	48

Table 2: Pearson Correlations of EFT and I-E Scores With Marital Complaints

	H Locke Wallace	H Lovesick	W Locke Wallace	W Lovesick
H EFT	.02	-.09	.15	.00
W EFT	.24*	-.03	.08	-.06
EFT DIFF	-.06	-.03	-.27*	.06
H I-E	.03	.20	.13	.29*
W I-E	.17	-.19	-.01	.01
I-E DIFF	.03	-.17	-.11	-.02

* p .05